

This is an excerpt of Senator Hatch's appropriations request letter to Chairman Specter and Sen. Harkin expressing concern about Perkins (vocational) funding:

Restore Perkins Act funding or a Perkins-type technical and vocational education support or earmark \$2 billion to offset education cuts.

The President's reauthorization strategy, which replaces the current Vocational Education State Grants program with the Omnibus Secondary and Technical Education State Grants program, indisputably contributes to his No Child Left Behind (NCLB) objectives. However, the cost of this transition under the proposed spending levels reduces Vocational Education (Secondary and Technical Education) \$300 million below the FY2003 request. This outcome is punitive to the highly productive Vocational Education State Grants recipient community and threatens to collapse the carefully crafted vocational education infrastructure created under the Perkins Act.

It would seem both fair and beneficial to all parties to simultaneously sustain vocational education while promoting NCLB by adding \$300 million to the President's FY2004 request for Secondary and Technical Education State Grants, raising the FY2004 funding level to \$1.3 billion, of which no less than \$1.18 billion is committed to the spending formulas established under the FY2003 Vocational Education State Grants program. In addition, I would note that the formulas enacted under Vocational Education State Grants have expired with the Perkins Act and would have to be reauthorized if the HELP Committee does not act.